



Information for parents of students starting school (from language backgrounds other than English)

Helping your child when they start school.

Student Information

Please give the school as much information about you and your child as you can.



Tell the school:

- how to write and say your child's name.
- your country of origin,
- the languages spoken at home spoken by you and family members,
- your visa status - permanent /temporary
- your reasons for coming to Australia,
- your home address and contact details,
- your child's level of education in their country of origin,
- your child's religion / scripture choice
- your work in Australia

This information will help teachers to develop a relationship your child, help them understand your child and assist them in developing a class program. The information is also important because it provides accurate data for the school records.

Introduction to school

Talk to your child about going to school. This is a new experience for them.

Walk around the school with your child. Look all over inside and outside.




Go with your child and find: -

- their classroom,
- the toilets,
- the library,
- the canteen,
- the office and other important places around the school.

If there is a map of the school take one and label it at home with your child.

Ask for a copy of the school rules, a class timetable and a school calendar.

Explain the school bells  and make sure your child knows where and when you will pick them up after school.

The "Buddy System"

Many schools have a "buddy system" for new students and to help them settle in. In some cases the "buddy" may speak your child's language. The "buddy" may participate in specific activities designed to help your child learn English. The buddy and your child may work together. Ask your child if they have been working with someone in class who is helping them in class and looking after them in the playground.



EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

If your child has been to school in their country of birth and achieved a high standard they may feel they are failing.



DON'T WORRY!



It is very normal for older students learning a new language to feel this way. It takes 1-2 years to develop basic skills in English language communication.

It takes up to 7 years to be able to use English for academic purposes. At school your child will receive support from an English teacher (ESL) who will support your child during this period.

If your child is more than 11yrs old they may be able to attend an Intensive English Centre where they will receive English support in a setting similar to high school. This is a good learning environment for an older student..

Some helpful advice to keep your child happy at school

- Be sure your child is at school before the morning bell rings.
- Give your child some food before school for breakfast.
- Give your child food for lunch at school that is easy to eat such as a sandwich; but NOT TOO MUCH FOOD. They will not have time to eat it!
- Label your child's lunch box and clothing with the name they will use at school and be sure they can recognise the name and their own things.
- Allow your child to wear the school uniform because this will help them to feel more comfortable.
- Your child will also need a sport uniform. All schools have a sport program
- You may want to give your child some money for the canteen. This is a good way for them to learn about Australian money
- Be sure you pick your child up after school at the correct time.



COMMUNICATING WITH THE SCHOOL



Ask for a translator to help you speak with teachers at school if you need one. The school can get a translator to speak to you by telephone at home or at school. They can also request a translator to come to the school usually within 2-3 days of the request. This is a free service.

Your child will bring notes home from school. You can ask the school to provide you with translated notes. Many are available from the Department of Education website.

If your child is sick or unable to attend school you must tell the school. Telephone the school and tell the office staff or write a letter to send with your child when they return to school.